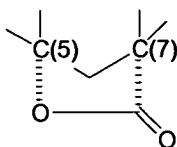


IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-58 (cancelled).

Claim 59 (presently amended): A process for the preparation of a 4,5-dihydro-5,7-lactone steroid compound, said lactone steroid being substituted with keto or dialkoxy at the 3-carbon, and comprising the moiety:



where C(5) represents the 5-carbon and C(7) represents the 7-carbon of the steroid structure of the lactone compound,

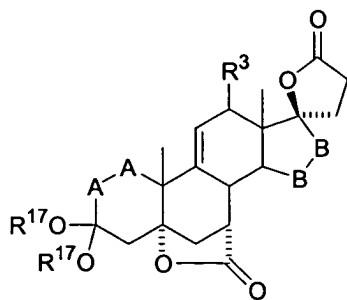
the process comprising:

converting a 7-cyano substituted steroid to the corresponding 7-carboxylic acid substituted steroid, and thereafter converting the 7-carboxylic acid substituted steroid to the corresponding 5,7-lactone substituted steroid.

Claim 60 (presently amended): A process as set forth in claim 59 wherein the 7-carboxylic acid substituted steroid substrate comprises a 3-keto- $\Delta$ -4,5-7-carboxy steroid, and a ketal intermediate comprising a 3-dialkoxy-5,7-lactone is formed, said 3-dialkoxy-5,7-lactone being hydrolyzed under the acidic conditions to form the 3-keto-5,7-lactone.

Claims 61-62 (cancelled).

Claim 63 (previously amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula E:



E

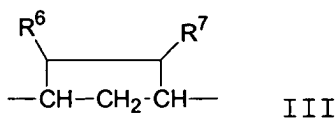
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$\text{R}^{17}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

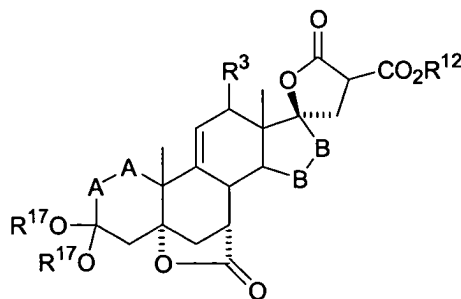


III

where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl and cyano and aryloxy;

the process comprising:

thermally decomposing a compound corresponding to Formula DE2 in the presence of an alkali metal halide, said compound of Formula DE2 having the structure:

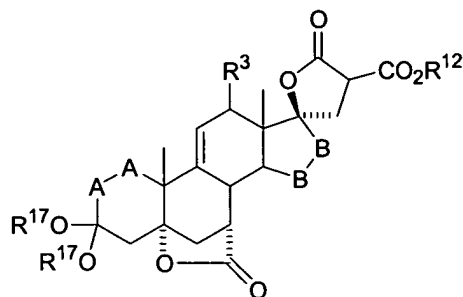


DE2

wherein  $\text{R}^{12}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl, and -A-A-, -B-B-,  $\text{R}^3$  and  $\text{R}^{17}$

are as defined above.

Claim 64 (previously amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula DE2:



DE2

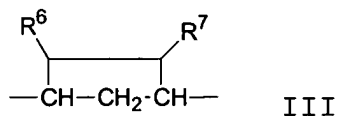
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$\text{R}^{12}$  and  $\text{R}^{17}$  are independently selected from among  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

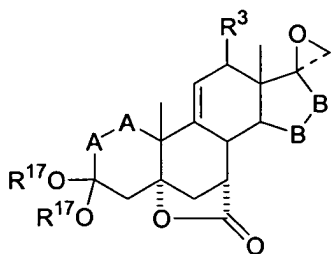


III

where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

the process comprising:

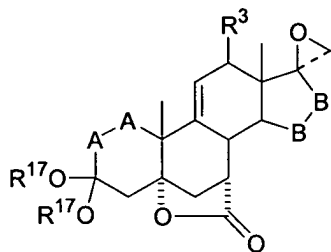
condensing a compound of Formula DE1 with a dialkyl malonate in the presence of a base, said compound of Formula DE1 having the structure:



DE1

wherein -A-A-, -B-B-,  $R^3$  and  $R^{17}$  are as defined above.

Claim 65 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula DE1:



DE1

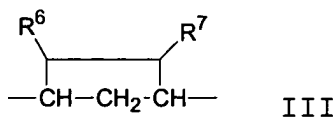
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$R^{17}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



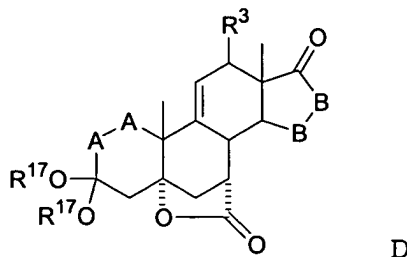
III

where  $R^6$  and  $R^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

the process comprising:

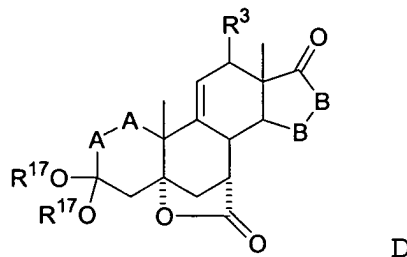
reacting a compound of Formula D with a sulfonium ylide in the presence of a base, said compound of Formula D having the

structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-,  $R^3$  and  $R^{17}$  are as defined above.

Claim 66 (previously amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula D:



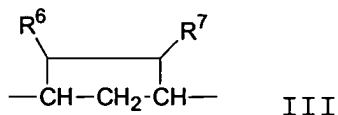
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$R^{17}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

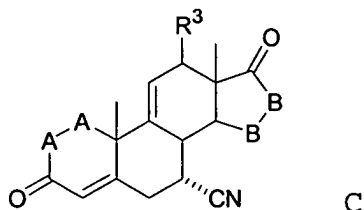


where  $R^6$  and  $R^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxyalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

the process comprising:

hydrolysis of a compound of Formula C to the 7 $\alpha$ -carboxylic

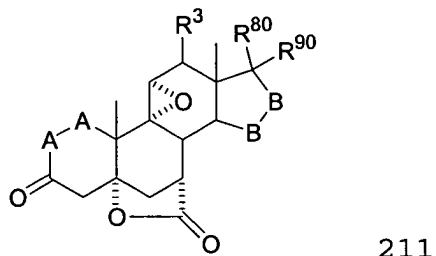
acid and reaction under acidic conditions with a trialkyl orthoformate, the compound of Formula C having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B- and R<sup>3</sup> are as defined above.

Claims 67-68 (cancelled).

Claim 69 (previously amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula 211:

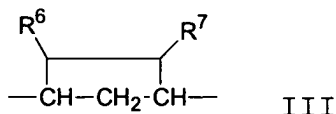


wherein

-A-A- represents the group -CHR<sup>4</sup>-CHR<sup>5</sup>- or -CR<sup>4</sup>=CR<sup>5</sup>-;

R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-B-B- represents the group -CHR<sup>6</sup>-CHR<sup>7</sup>- or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



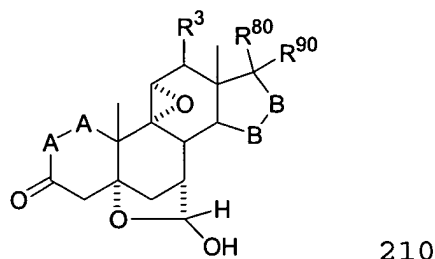
where R<sup>6</sup> and R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$R^{80}$  and  $R^{90}$  are independently selected from  $R^8$  and  $R^9$ , respectively or  $R^{80}$  and  $R^{90}$  together form keto;

$R^8$  and  $R^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, [hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl] hydroxycarbonylalkyl, [alkoxycarbonyl] alkoxycarbonylalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $R^8$  and  $R^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $R^8$  or  $R^9$  together with  $R^6$  or  $R^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring;

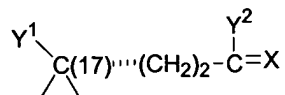
the process comprising:

oxidizing a compound of Formula 210, said compound of Formula 210 having the structure



where -A-A-, -B-B-,  $R^3$ ,  $R^{80}$  and  $R^{90}$  are as defined above.

Claim 70 (currently amended): A process as set forth in claim 69 wherein  ~~$R^8$  and  $R^9$~~   $R^{80}$  and  $R^{90}$  together with C(17) comprise



where X represents two hydrogen atoms, oxo or =S;

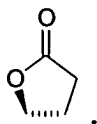
$Y^1$  and  $Y^2$  together represent the oxygen bridge -O-, or

$Y^1$  represents hydroxy, and

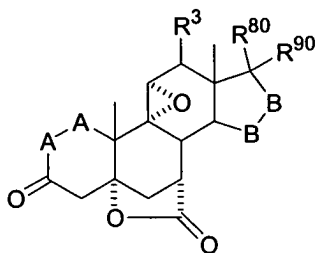
$Y^2$  represents hydroxy, lower alkoxy or, if X represents  $H_2$ , also lower alkanoyloxy.

Claim 71 (currently amended): A process as set forth in claim 70

wherein ~~R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup>~~ R<sup>80</sup> and R<sup>90</sup> together with C(17) comprise



Claim 72 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to the Formula **A211**:



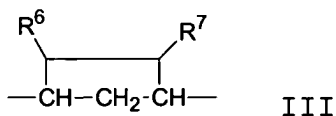
A211

wherein

-A-A- represents the group -CHR<sup>4</sup>-CHR<sup>5</sup>- or -CR<sup>4</sup>=CR<sup>5</sup>-;

R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-B-B- represents the group -CHR<sup>6</sup>-CHR<sup>7</sup>- or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



III

where R<sup>6</sup> and R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

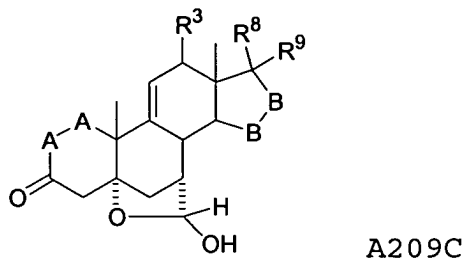
R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, [hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl] hydroxycarbonylalkyl, [alkoxycarbonyl] alkoxycarbonylalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup> together comprise a



carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or R<sup>8</sup> or R<sup>9</sup> together with R<sup>6</sup> or R<sup>7</sup> comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring;

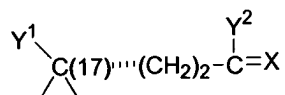
the process comprising:

reacting a 3-keto-5,7-hemiacetal intermediate of Formula A209C with a peroxide oxidizing reagent, said compound of Formula A209C corresponding to the formula:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup> are as defined above.

Claim 73 (currently amended): A process as set forth in claim 72 wherein ~~R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup>~~ R<sup>80</sup> and R<sup>90</sup> together with C(17) comprise



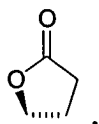
where X represents two hydrogen atoms, oxo or =S;

Y<sup>1</sup> and Y<sup>2</sup> together represent the oxygen bridge -O-, or

Y<sup>1</sup> represents hydroxy, and

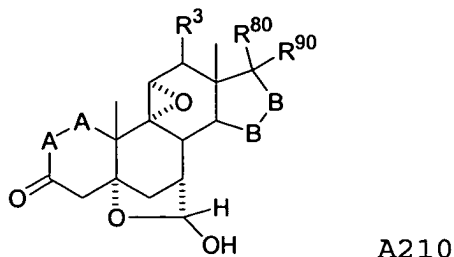
Y<sup>2</sup> represents hydroxy, lower alkoxy or, if X represents H<sub>2</sub>, also lower alkanoyloxy.

Claim 74 (currently amended): A process as set forth in claim 73 wherein ~~R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup>~~ R<sup>80</sup> and R<sup>90</sup> together with C(17) comprise



Claim 75 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a

compound corresponding to the Formula **A210**:

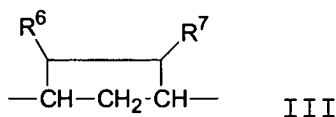


wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxy carbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

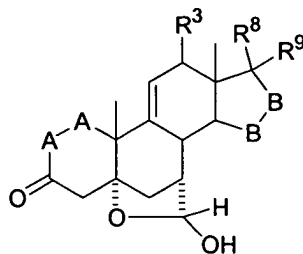
$\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  are independently selected from  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$ , respectively, or  $\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  together form keto;

$\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxy carbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $\text{R}^8$  or  $\text{R}^9$  together with  $\text{R}^6$  or  $\text{R}^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring;

the process comprising:

reacting a 3-keto-5,7-hemiacetal intermediate of Formula

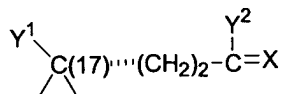
A209C with a peroxide oxidizing reagent, said compound of Formula A209C corresponding to the formula:



A209C

wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup> are as defined above.

Claim 76 (currently amended): A process as set forth in claim 75 wherein ~~R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup>~~ R<sup>80</sup> and R<sup>90</sup> together with C(17) comprise



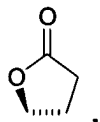
where X represents two hydrogen atoms, oxo or =S;

Y<sup>1</sup> and Y<sup>2</sup> together represent the oxygen bridge -O-, or

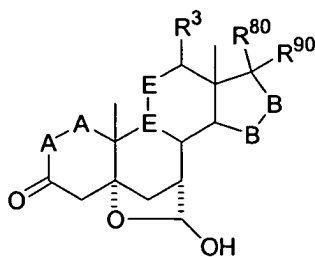
Y<sup>1</sup> represents hydroxy, and

Y<sup>2</sup> represents hydroxy, lower alkoxy or, if X represents H<sub>2</sub>, also lower alkanoyloxy.

Claim 77 (currently amended): A process as set forth in claim 76 wherein ~~R<sup>8</sup> and R<sup>9</sup>~~ R<sup>80</sup> and R<sup>90</sup> together with C(17) comprise



Claim 78 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to the Formula A209:



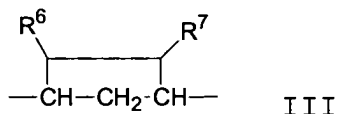
A209

wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



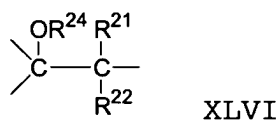
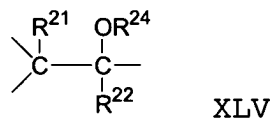
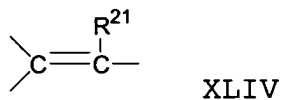
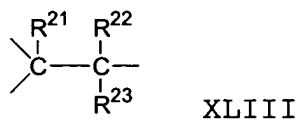
III

where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

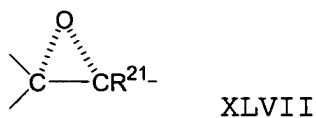
$\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  are independently selected from  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$ , respectively, or  $\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  together form keto;

$\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, hydroxycarbonylalkyl, [alkoxycarbonyl] alkoxycarbonylalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $\text{R}^8$  or  $\text{R}^9$  together with  $\text{R}^6$  or  $\text{R}^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring;

and -E-E- is selected from among:



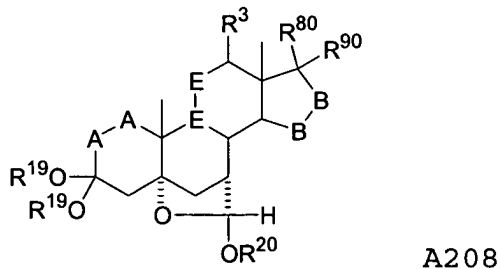
and



where  $R^{21}$ ,  $R^{22}$  and  $R^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano; and  $R^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl;

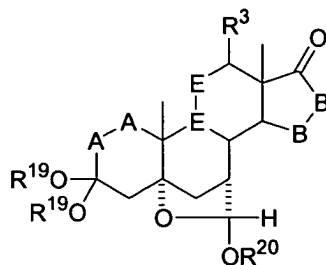
the process comprising:

hydrolyzing a compound corresponding to the Formula A208



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, -E-E-,  $R^3$ ,  $R^{80}$  and  $R^{90}$  are as defined above;  $R^{19}$  is  $C_1$  to  $C_4$  alkyl or the  $[R^{18}O-]$   $R^{19}O-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge; and  $R^{20}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$  alkyl.

Claim 79 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula A205:



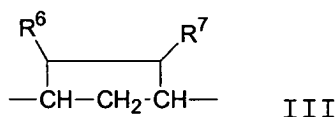
A205

wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



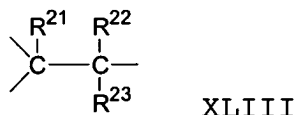
III

where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

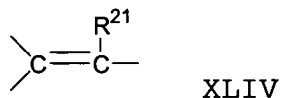
$\text{R}^{19}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl or the  $[\text{R}^{18}\text{O}-]$   $\text{R}^{19}\text{O}-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge; and

$\text{R}^{20}$  is  $\text{C}_1$ - $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

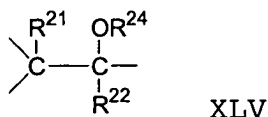
wherein -E-E- is selected from among:



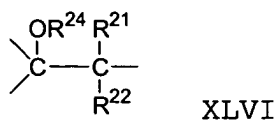
XLIII



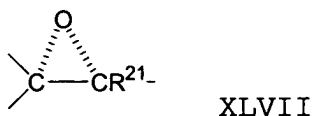
XLIV



XLV



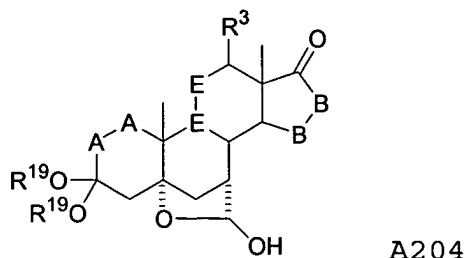
and



where  $R^{21}$ ,  $R^{22}$  and  $R^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano;  $R^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl;

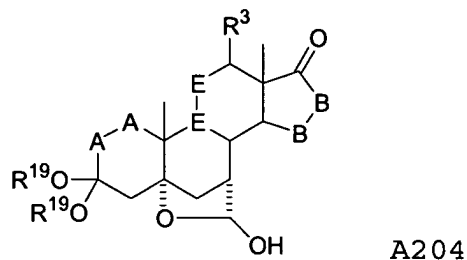
the process comprising:

reacting a compound corresponding to Formula A204 with a lower alcohol and an acid, said compound of Formula A204 having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, -E-E-,  $R^3$ , and  $R^{19}$  are as defined above.

Claim 80 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula A204:



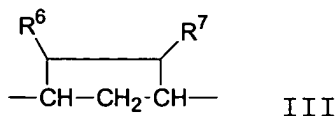
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  are independently selected from the group

consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano aryloxy;

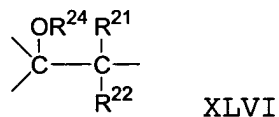
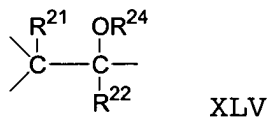
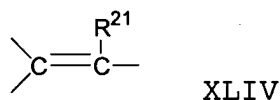
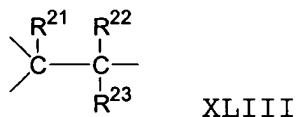
-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



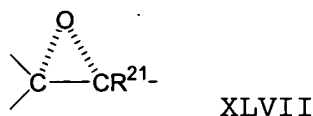
where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

$\text{R}^{19}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl or the  $\text{R}^{19}\text{O}-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

wherein -E-E- is selected from among:



and



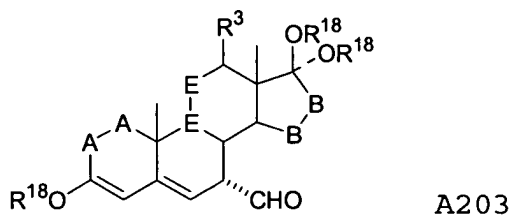
where  $\text{R}^{21}$ ,  $\text{R}^{22}$  and  $\text{R}^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano; and  $\text{R}^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl;

the process comprising:

hydrolyzing compound corresponding to Formula A203, said

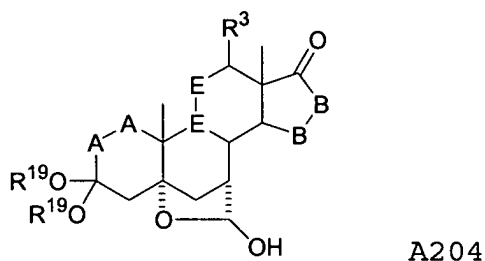


compound of Formula A203 having the structure:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, -E-E- and  $R^3$  are as defined above, and  $R^{18}$  is  $C_1$  to  $C_4$  alkyl or the  $R^{18}O$ - groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge.

Claim 81 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to Formula A204:

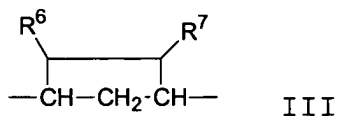


wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-CHR^4-CHR^5-$  or  $-CR^4=CR^5-$ ;

$R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group  $-CHR^6-CHR^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

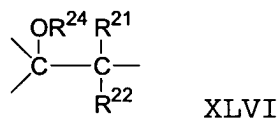
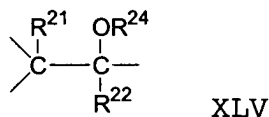
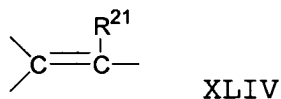
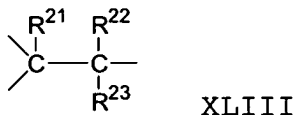


where  $R^6$  and  $R^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxyalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

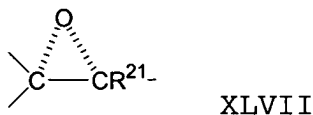
$R^{19}$  is  $C_1$  to  $C_4$  alkyl or the  $R^{19}O$ - groups together form an

O,O-oxyalkylene bridge; and

wherein -E-E- is selected from among:



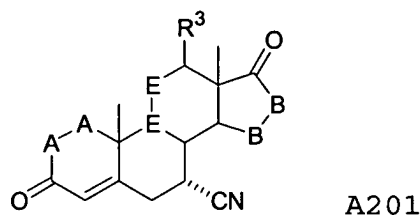
and



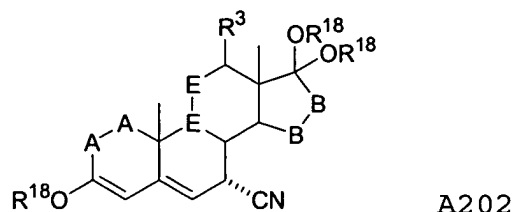
where  $\text{R}^{18}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl or the  $\text{R}^{18}\text{O}-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;  $\text{R}^{21}$ ,  $\text{R}^{22}$  and  $\text{R}^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano; and  $\text{R}^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl;

the process comprising:

protecting the keto substituents of a compound corresponding to Formula A201 by reaction with alkanol under acid condition in the presence of orthoformate, said compound of Formula A201 having the structure:



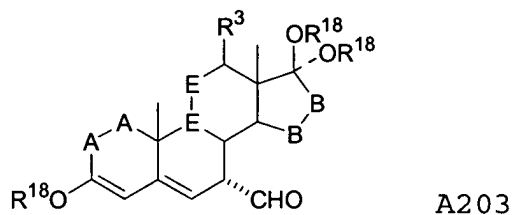
wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, -E-E- and  $\text{R}^3$ , are as defined above, thereby producing a 3-enol ether intermediate corresponding to Formula A202:



wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, -E-E- and R<sup>3</sup> are as defined above, and R<sup>18</sup> is C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>4</sub> alkyl or the R<sup>18</sup>O- groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge; and

reducing said compound of Formula A202.

Claim 82 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a compound corresponding to the formula A203:

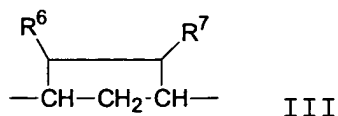


wherein

-A-A- represents the group -CHR<sup>4</sup>-CHR<sup>5</sup>- or -CR<sup>4</sup>=CR<sup>5</sup>-;

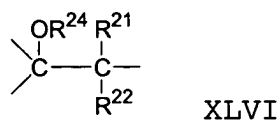
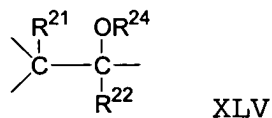
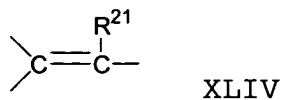
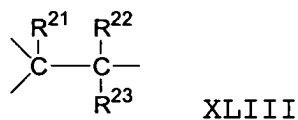
R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group -CHR<sup>6</sup>-CHR<sup>7</sup>- or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

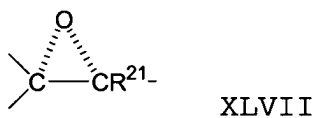


where R<sup>6</sup> and R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

wherein -E-E- is selected from among:



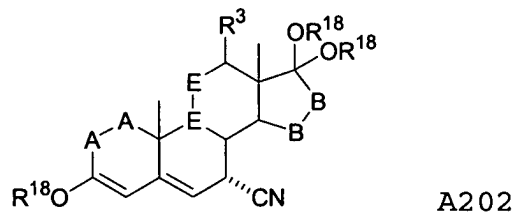
and



where  $R^{18}$  is  $C_1$  to  $C_4$  alkyl or the  $R^{18}O$ - groups at C-17 together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;  $R^{21}$ ,  $R^{22}$  and  $R^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano; and  $R^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl;

the process comprising:

reducing a compound corresponding to Formula A202:

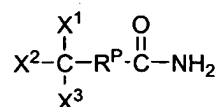


wherein -A-A-, -B-B-, -E-E-,  $R^3$ , and  $R^{18}$  are as defined above.

Claims 83-92 (cancelled).

Claim 93 (previously amended): A process for the formation of an epoxy compound comprising contacting a substrate compound having

an olefinic double bond with a peroxide compound in the presence of a peroxide activator, wherein said peroxide activator is chlorodifluoroacetamide or corresponds to a compound having to the formula



wherein

$\text{R}^{\text{P}}$  is selected from the group consisting of alkenyl, alkynyl and  $-(\text{CX}^4\text{X}^5)_2-$ ;

$\text{X}^1$ ,  $\text{X}^2$ ,  $\text{X}^3$ ,  $\text{X}^4$  and  $\text{X}^5$  are independently selected from among halo, hydrogen, alkyl, haloalkyl and cyano and cyanoalkyl; and provided that at least one of  $\text{X}^4$  and  $\text{X}^5$  is halo.

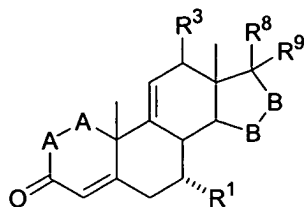
Claim 94 (previously amended): A process as set forth in claim 93 wherein and at least two of  $\text{X}^1$ ,  $\text{X}^2$  and  $\text{X}^3$  are halo or perhaloalkyl.

Claim 95 (previously amended): A process as set forth in claim 93 wherein all of  $\text{X}^1$ ,  $\text{X}^2$ ,  $\text{X}^3$ ,  $\text{X}^4$  and  $\text{X}^5$  are halo or perhaloalkyl.

Claims 96-97. (cancelled)

Claim 98 (previously amended): A process as set forth in claim 93 wherein said peroxide activator is selected from the group consisting of chlorodifluoroacetamide and heptafluorobutyramide.

Claim 99 (previously amended): A process as set forth in claim 93 wherein said substrate compound corresponds to the Formula:



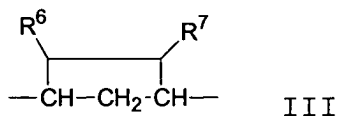
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxy carbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$\text{R}^1$  represents an alpha-oriented lower alkoxy carbonyl or hydroxycarbonyl radical;

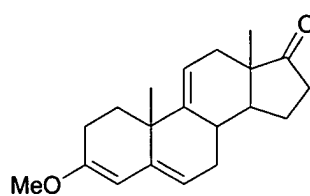
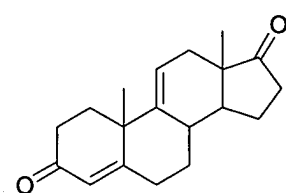
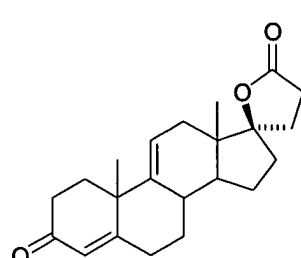
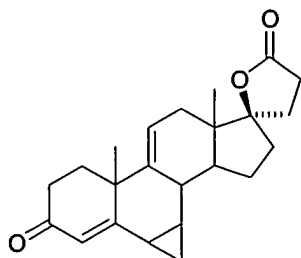
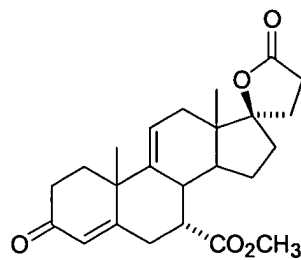
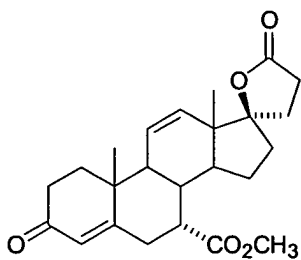
-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



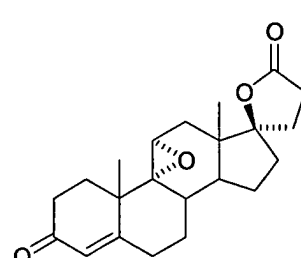
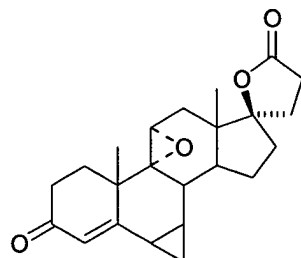
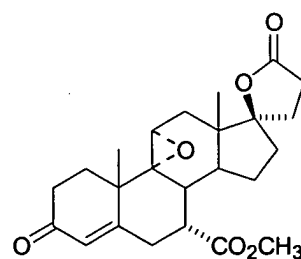
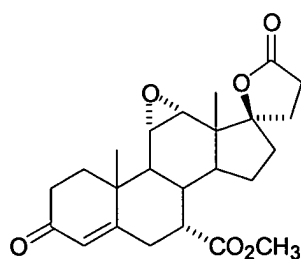
where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxy carbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

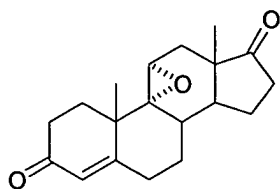
$\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, **[hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl]** hydroxycarbonylalkyl, [alkoxy carbonyl] alkoxy carbonylalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $\text{R}^8$  or  $\text{R}^9$  together with  $\text{R}^6$  or  $\text{R}^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring.

Claim 100 (previously amended): A process as set forth in claim 93 wherein said substrate compound is selected from the group consisting of:

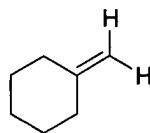
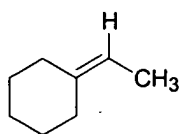
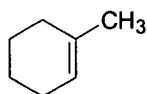
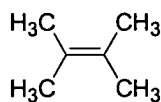
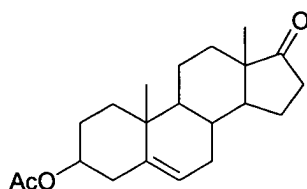


and a product of the epoxidation reaction is selected from the group consisting of:



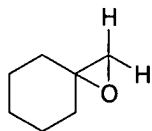
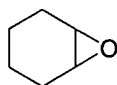
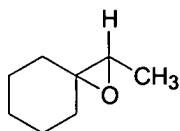
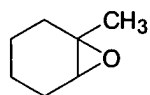
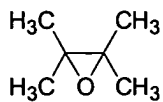
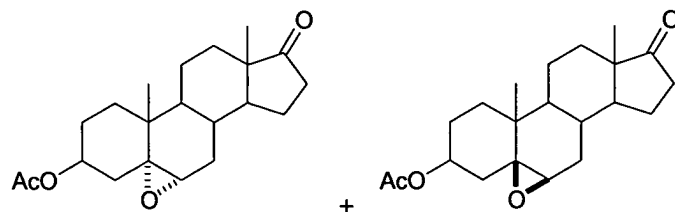


Claim 101 (previously amended): A process as set forth in claim 93 wherein said substrate compound is selected from the group consisting of:



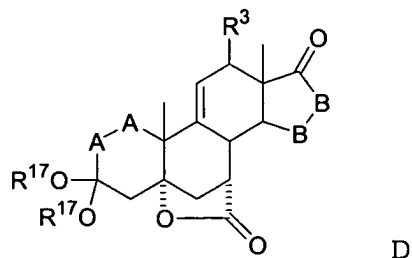
and a product of the epoxidation reaction is selected from the group consisting of:





Claim 102-140 (cancelled).

Claim 141 (previously amended): A compound corresponding to  
Formula D:



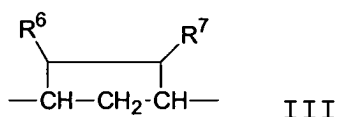
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

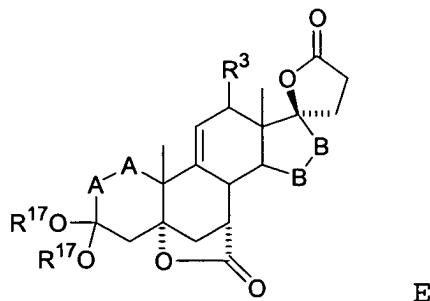
$\text{R}^{17}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxyalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy.

Claim 142 (previously amended): A compound corresponding to Formula E:



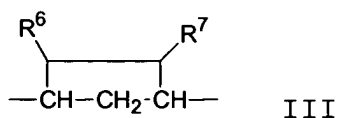
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

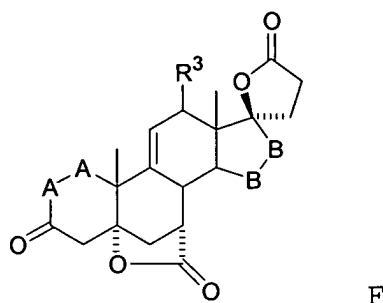
$\text{R}^{17}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy.

Claim 143 (previously amended): A compound corresponding to Formula F:

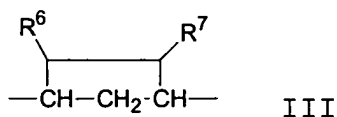


wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

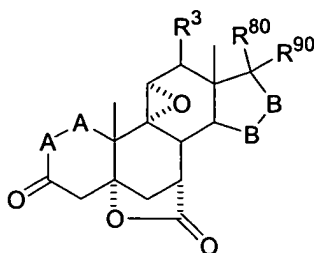
-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy.

Claim 144 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to

Formula A211:



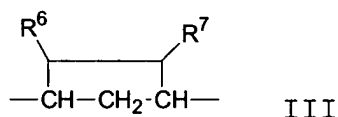
A211

wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



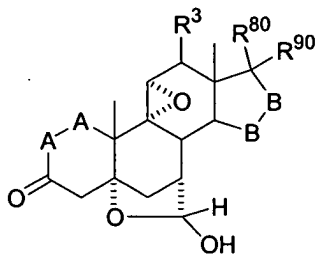
III

where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  are independently selected from  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$ , respectively or  $\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  together form keto; and

$\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, [**hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl**], **hydroxycarbonylalkyl**, [**alkoxycarbonyl**] **alkoxycarbonylalkyl**, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $\text{R}^8$  or  $\text{R}^9$  together with  $\text{R}^6$  or  $\text{R}^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring.

Claim 145 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to  
Formula A210:



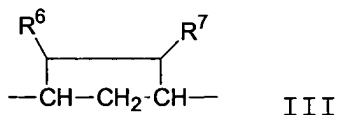
210

wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



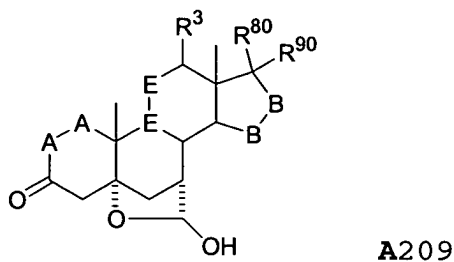
III

where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  are independently selected from  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$ , respectively, or  $\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  together form keto; and

$\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, **[hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl]** **hydroxycarbonylalkyl**, **[alkoxycarbonyl] alkoxycarbonylalkyl**, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $\text{R}^8$  or  $\text{R}^9$  together with  $\text{R}^6$  or  $\text{R}^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring.

Claim 146 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to  
Formula A209:

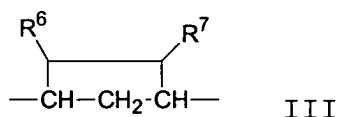


wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

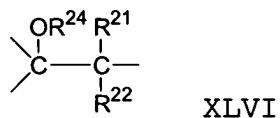
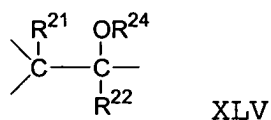
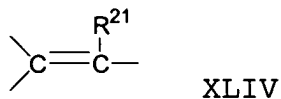
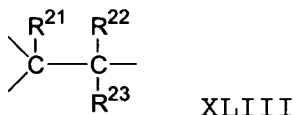
$\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  are independently selected from  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$ , respectively, or  $\text{R}^{80}$  and  $\text{R}^{90}$  together form keto;

$\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, [hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl]

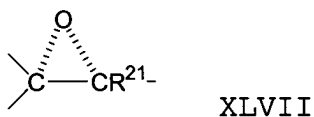
hydroxycarbonylalkyl, [alkoxycarbonyl] alkoxycarbonylalkyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy, or  $\text{R}^8$  and  $\text{R}^9$  together comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring structure, or  $\text{R}^8$  or  $\text{R}^9$  together with  $\text{R}^6$  or  $\text{R}^7$  comprise a carbocyclic or heterocyclic ring

structure fused to the pentacyclic D ring; and

-E-E- is selected from among:



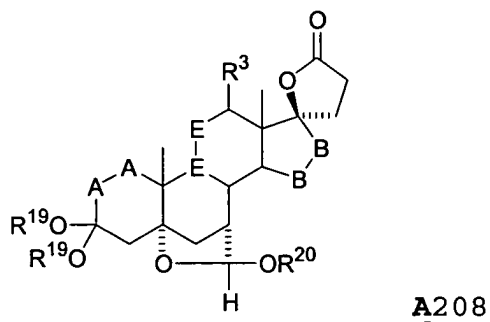
and



where  $\text{R}^{21}$ ,  $\text{R}^{22}$  and  $\text{R}^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano; and

$\text{R}^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl.

Claim 147 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to Formula A208:



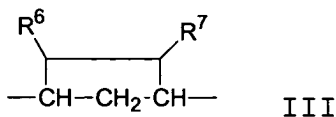
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy,

hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

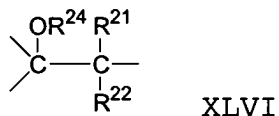
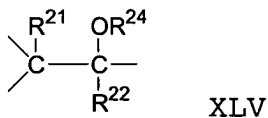
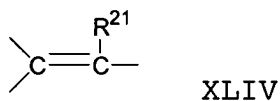
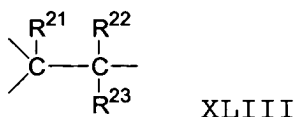
-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:



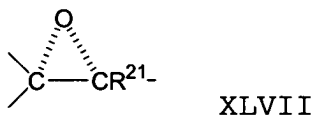
where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxy carbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

$\text{R}^{20}$  is  $\text{C}_1$ - $\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-E-E- is selected from among:



and



where  $\text{R}^{19}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl or the  $\text{R}^{18}\text{O}-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

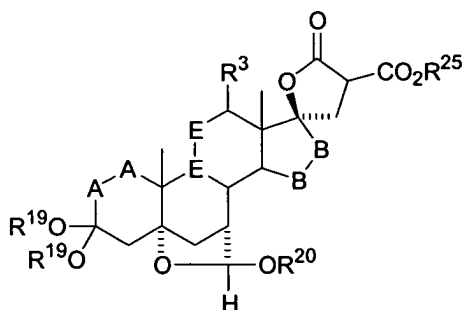
$\text{R}^{21}$ ,  $\text{R}^{22}$  and  $\text{R}^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano; and

$\text{R}^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl.

Claim 148 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to



Formula A207:



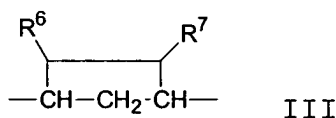
A207

wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

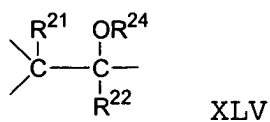
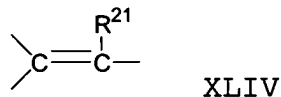
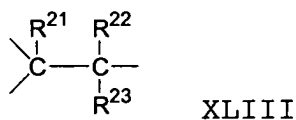
-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

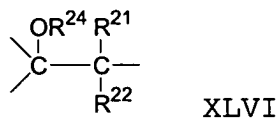


where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

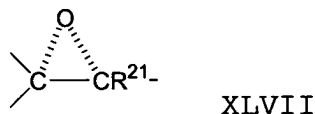
$\text{R}^{20}$  is  $\text{C}_1-\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

-E-E- is selected from among:





and



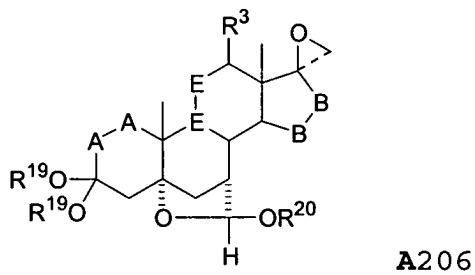
where R<sup>19</sup> is C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>4</sub> alkyl or the R<sup>18</sup>O- groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

R<sup>21</sup>, R<sup>22</sup> and R<sup>23</sup> are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano;

R<sup>24</sup> is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl; and

R<sup>25</sup> is C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>4</sub> alkyl.

Claim 149 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to Formula A206:

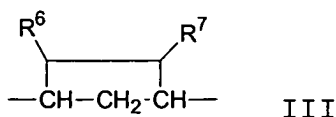


wherein

-A-A- represents the group -CHR<sup>4</sup>-CHR<sup>5</sup>- or -CR<sup>4</sup>=CR<sup>5</sup>-;

R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group -CHR<sup>6</sup>-CHR<sup>7</sup>- or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

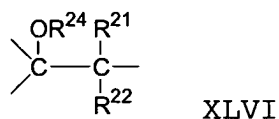
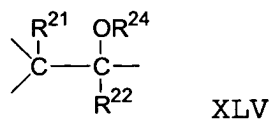
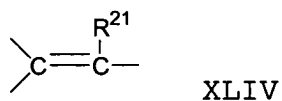
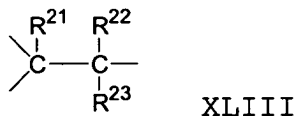


where R<sup>6</sup> and R<sup>7</sup> are independently selected from the group

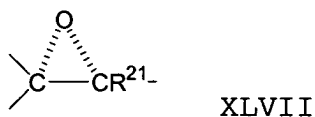
consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy;

$R^{20}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$  alkyl; and

-E-E- is selected from among:



and

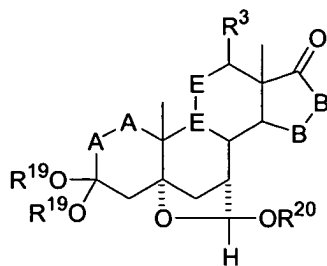


where  $R^{19}$  is  $C_1$  to  $C_4$  alkyl or the  $R^{18}O$ - groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

$R^{21}$ ,  $R^{22}$  and  $R^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano;

$R^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl.

Claim 150 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to Formula A205:



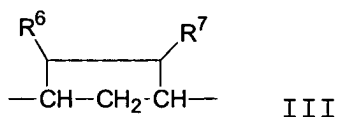
A205

wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

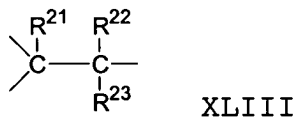


III

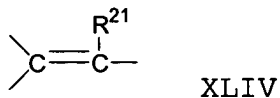
where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

$\text{R}^{19}$  ~~and~~  $\text{R}^{20}$  is ~~are independently~~ selected from  $\text{C}_1-\text{C}_4$  alkyl; and

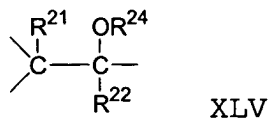
-E-E- is selected from among:



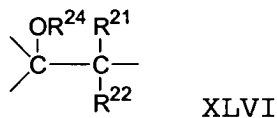
XLIII



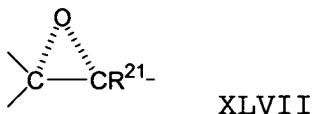
XLIV



XLV



and

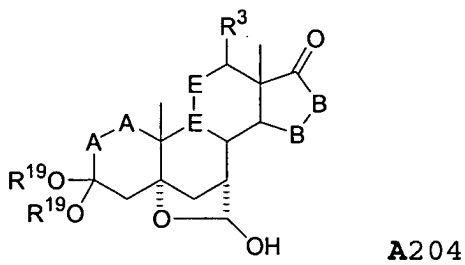


where  $R^{19}$  is  $C_1$  to  $C_4$  alkyl or the  $[R^{18}O-]$   $R^{19}O-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

$R^{21}$ ,  $R^{22}$  and  $R^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano;

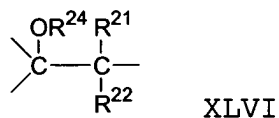
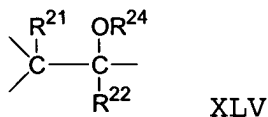
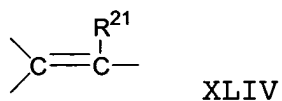
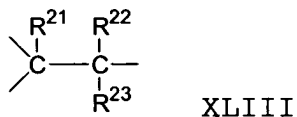
$R^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl.

Claim 151 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to Formula A204:

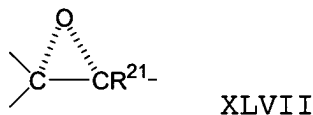


acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-E-E- is selected from among:



and

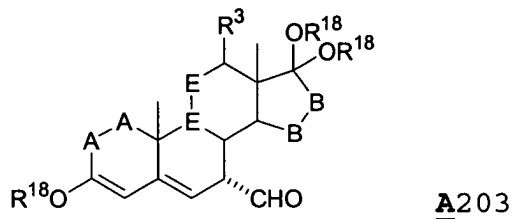


where  $[\text{R}^{18}] \text{R}^{19}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl or the  $[\text{R}^{18}\text{O}-] \text{R}^{19}\text{O}-$  groups together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

$\text{R}^{21}$ ,  $\text{R}^{22}$  and  $\text{R}^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano;

$\text{R}^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl.

Claim 152 (currently amended): A compound corresponding to Formula A203:



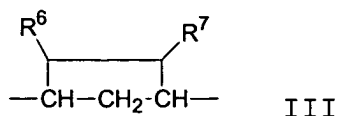
wherein

-A-A- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^4-\text{CHR}^5-$  or  $-\text{CR}^4=\text{CR}^5-$ ;

$\text{R}^3$ ,  $\text{R}^4$  and  $\text{R}^5$  are independently selected from the group

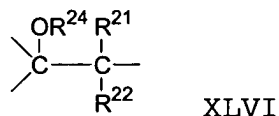
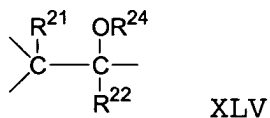
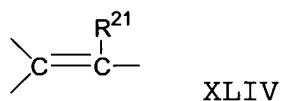
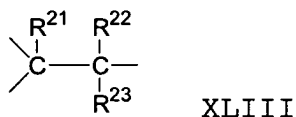
consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, cyano and aryloxy;

-B-B- represents the group  $-\text{CHR}^6-\text{CHR}^7-$  or an alpha- or beta-oriented group:

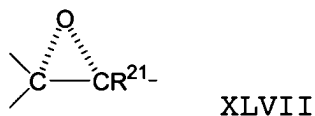


where  $\text{R}^6$  and  $\text{R}^7$  are independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, lower alkoxy, acyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, hydroxycarbonyl, alkyl, alkoxycarbonyl, acyloxyalkyl, cyano and aryloxy; and

-E-E- is selected from among:



and



where  $\text{R}^{18}$  is  $\text{C}_1$  to  $\text{C}_4$  alkyl or the  $\text{R}^{18}\text{O}-$  groups at C-17 together form an O,O-oxyalkylene bridge;

$\text{R}^{21}$ ,  $\text{R}^{22}$  and  $\text{R}^{23}$  are independently selected from among hydrogen, alkyl, halo, nitro, and cyano;

$\text{R}^{24}$  is selected from among hydrogen and lower alkyl.